HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL

LGOIMA Response – No Comparative Analysis of Infrastructure Protection versus Managed Retreat; No Ratepayer-Impact Modelling Identified

LGOIMA 596173 | Response received July 2026

1. Purpose of this Note

This note records the formal response of Hamilton City Council to LGOIMA request 596173 concerning consultant expenditure and comparative analysis of infrastructure protection options versus managed retreat or property acquisition pathways. It is prepared as a public-interest transparency record.

2. Request Summary

The request sought (in summary):

- Total expenditure on external consultants, advisors, or contractors for flood protection, stormwater, river management, coastal hazard assessment, managed retreat, property acquisition, or climate adaptation planning from 1 July 2020, broken down by financial year and major project where possible.
- Any reports, briefings, technical assessments, or analysis prepared since 2020 comparing major infrastructure protection options (drainage upgrades, stopbanks, pumping systems, land raising) versus managed retreat, property acquisition, or voluntary buyout pathways in Hamilton or the wider Waikato area.
- Any modelling or advice on the long-term impacts on ratepayers, property values, or Council revenue from large-scale property acquisition or managed retreat in the city or region.

3. Key Formal Responses

3.1 Comparative analysis

Hamilton City Council stated:

“Council has not identified any report, briefing, technical assessment or analysis held by Hamilton City Council since 2020 that directly compares the costs, benefits, risks or long-term outcomes of major infrastructure protection options, such as drainage upgrades, stopbanks, pumping systems or land raising, against managed retreat, property acquisition or voluntary buyout pathways for Hamilton or the wider Waikato area.”

Council noted that it holds and publishes information relating to stormwater, flood modelling, flood mapping, infrastructure planning and risk assessment, but characterised that material as distinct from a comparative assessment between infrastructure protection and managed retreat.

3.2 Ratepayer, property-value and revenue impact modelling

Hamilton City Council stated:

“Council has not identified any modelling or advice held by Hamilton City Council that specifically assesses the long-term impacts on ratepayers, property values or Council revenue from large-scale property acquisition or managed retreat in Hamilton or the wider Waikato region.”

General information about flood mapping and property revaluations was referenced; Council stated that this does not constitute modelling or advice on large-scale property acquisition or managed retreat.

3.3 Expenditure

Council released stormwater capital and operational consultant/contractor expenditure by financial year and a schedule of stormwater-related works. It also identified climate adaptation planning / climate change risk assessment expenditure totalling $100,650.10 (excl. GST) across the period.

Council stated it had not identified separate Hamilton City Council expenditure for flood protection, river management, coastal hazard assessment, managed retreat, property acquisition, or large-scale voluntary buyout pathways, noting that some of these matters align more closely with Waikato Regional Council functions.

4. Significance

This response adds two further formal data points to the national pattern:

- Hamilton City Council has stated that it has not identified any comparative analysis of infrastructure protection options versus managed retreat / property acquisition pathways.
- The same Council has stated that it has not identified any modelling or advice on the long-term impacts on ratepayers, property values, or Council revenue from large-scale property acquisition or managed retreat.

5. Source Document

Hamilton City Council LGOIMA response, reference 596173, July 2026 (Keeley Faulkner, Official Information Advisor and Legal support officer).

Public-interest transparency record prepared from primary LGOIMA response material. July 2026.